



Arizona State Senate

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Governor signs bill to help identify vacant space in Arizona schools

SB 1161 also establishes school partnerships to best use facilities

(Phoenix, State Capitol) --- Governor Ducey on Wednesday signed **SB 1161**, part of a decade-long effort to best identify and use vacant classroom space in Arizona. The bill was sponsored by Senator Vince Leach, with the assistance of Senator Sonny Borrelli.

"It's no surprise with our fast growth and open enrollment/school choice options that you have some schools bursting at the seams, and others with several empty rooms," said Senator Leach. "It has been a challenge to find the right way to address this inequity. I believe **SB 1161** does it."

Those who've researched it believe there is at least 1.4 million square feet of vacant school building space in Arizona. **SB 1161** strengthens reporting requirements by telling districts to report buildings with at least 4,500 square feet of unused space. It also allows districts to sell vacant facilities without having to call an election.

Another key part of **SB 1161** is the establishment of school partnerships to operate schools or offer educational services in a vacant or partially used district building.

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